

EXHIBIT 10

Third robbery may be tied to escapees

By Jennifer Emily

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The seven escapees accused of killing a police officer may be responsible for the robbery of an Auto Zone near Houston five days after the prison break.

Police say the robbery was similar to others involving the escapees. Three men armed with pistols robbed the store about 9:30 p.m. Dec. 18, tying up three employees with duct tape and stealing cash and a car, Pasadena police said.

"We have not connected this robbery to the Connally Seven," Pasadena police Sgt. Mike Baird said. "We think it may be them. But it's way too early."

No one was injured during the robbery, police said.

The Auto Zone robbery is similar to crimes involving George Rivas, the purported ringleader of the escapees who was serving a life sentence for aggravated robbery and aggravated kidnapping, Sgt. Baird said.

"One of the suspects put on an Auto Zone shirt and stood at the front door, [and] the fact that it was close to closing time," Sgt. Baird said. "All ... things are similar to things that Rivas and his outlaw gang did before he went to prison."

Mr. Rivas, who has robbed previous places of employment, once worked for an Auto Zone in El Paso, police said.

Sgt. Baird said other similarities about the robbery were part of the investigation, and he could not release them.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice did not return phone

calls Sunday seeking comment.

An Auto Zone employee who answered the phone at the Pasadena store Sunday evening said he was not allowed to discuss the robbery.

The Auto Zone robbery was also similar to the Christmas Eve robbery at Oakman's Super Sports USA in Irving, where the assailants wore employees' shirts and stole an employee's sport-utility vehicle. In that robbery, Irving police Officer Aubrey Hawkins was shot and killed behind the store.

During the Auto Zone robbery, the robbers communicated with at least one other person by walkie-talkie, Sgt. Baird said. Police recovered an earpiece possibly used in the robbery from the stolen car, which was abandoned at a grocery store. Sgt. Baird said police planned to test it for DNA evidence.

Auto Zone employees did not identify the escapees in a photo lineup, but Sgt. Baird said an artist's sketch of the assailants bears a resemblance to the fugitives.

Authorities have connected two of the escapees to the Dec. 15 robbery of a Radio Shack in Pearland, another Houston suburb. There, the men stole radio equipment and police scanners that authorities believe they are using to monitor law enforcement.

Since the escape from the Connally Unit near Kennedy, Pasadena has had several escapee sightings, police said.